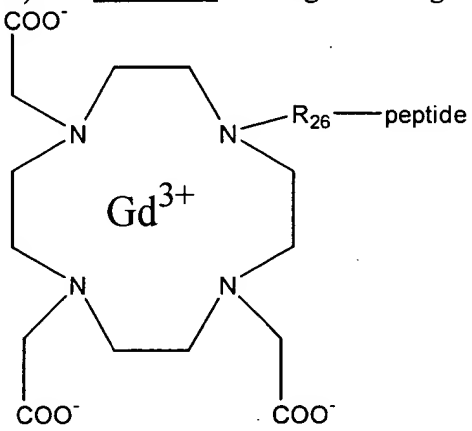
Amendments to the Claims

22. (Currently amended) An activatible MRI agent having the formula:



wherein R_{26} is a linker; and,
~~said peptide interacts with a protease~~ wherein upon interaction of said peptide with a protease, the T_1 of said MRI agent is decreased.

23. (Previously amended) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a caspase.

24. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is an interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

25. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

26. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a serine protease.

27. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a calpain.

28. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

29. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

30. (Currently amended) A method comprising:
a) administering an activatible MRI agent to a tissue, cell or patient, said MRI agent having the formula:

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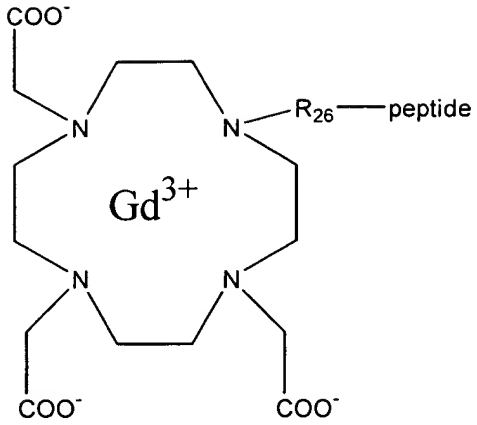
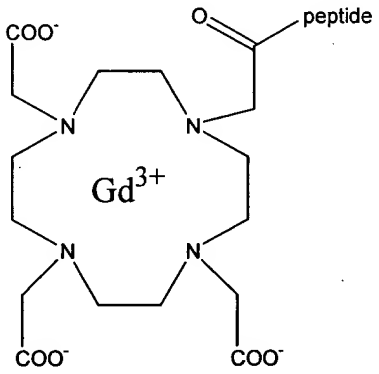


wherein R_{26} is a linker, and under conditions whereby said peptide interacts with a target substance in said tissue, cell or patient such that the ~~rapid exchange of water in at least one coordination site of said agent is increased~~ T_1 of said MRI agent is decreased, and,
b) acquiring a magnetic resonance image of said cell, tissue or patient.

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently amended) A method of according to claim 30 ~~or 42~~, said MRI agent having the formula:



33. (Currently amended) A method according to claim ~~30, 32 or 42~~ 30 or 32, wherein said target substance is a protease and said peptide interacts with said protease.

34. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a caspase.

35. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

36. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

37. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a serine protease.

38. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a calpain.

39. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

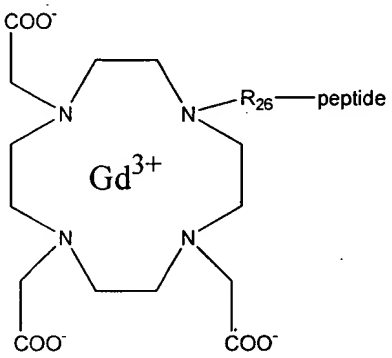
F1 cont'd

40. (Previously added) A method according to claim 33 wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

41. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 30 or 32, comprising administering a composition comprising said agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

42. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

a) administering an activatible MRI agent to a tissue, cell or patient, said MRI agent having the formula:



wherein R_{26} is a linker~~, and under conditions wherein said peptide hinders the rapid exchange of water in at least one coordination site~~; and

b) contacting said peptide with a target substance such that ~~the exchange of water in at least one coordination site is increased~~ upon interaction of said peptide with said target substance~~; and a therapeutic effect is elicited~~ the T1 value of said MRI agent is decreased.

43. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide inhibits said protease.

44. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide binds to said protease.

45. (Previously added) An MRI agent according to claim 22 wherein said peptide is a protease substrate.

46. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 30, 32, ~~33,~~ or 42 wherein said peptide inhibits said protease.

47. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 30, 32, ~~33,~~ or 42 wherein said peptide binds to said protease.

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48. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 30, 32, ~~33,~~ or 42 wherein said peptide is a protease substrate.

49. (New) A method according to claim 42, wherein R_{26} comprises -((CH_2)CO)-.

50. (New) A method according to claim 42, wherein said target substance is a protease and said peptide interacts with said protease.

51. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a caspase.

52. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a interleukin 1 beta-converting enzyme.

53. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a cysteine protease.

54. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a serine protease.

55. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a calpain.

56. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a cathepsin.

57. (New) A method according to claim 50, wherein said protease is a metalloproteinase.

58. (New) A method according to claim 42, comprising administering a composition comprising said agent and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.